

**From:** David Salinas  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 1/19/02 2:39pm  
**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

Dear DOJ,

I think the DOJ's settlement was a debacle. It was clearly big money (the economy, or lack thereof) at work that influenced John Ashcroft's (Attorney General) decision to work out a deal with Microsoft.

It seems as though Ashcroft's main interests was to close the case rather than offer a solution that was best for consumers.

Here's my analogy. If a husband and wife are having martial problems. You just don't make a deal to stop fighting just for the sake of stopping the fighting. That's just putting off the problem.

What you do is find out what's the cause of the conflict and then remedy that problem.

Ashcroft wanted to save tax payer money by passing on the case to the States. He caved. He did not do his job. Sometimes I think that he took a poll to find out if the DOJ vs Microsoft case was high on the priority list of the American people. Well, if you take polls, you get inaccurate results. Also, as you might know, popularity votes are not the best way to come to a decision. If that's the case, then Elvis would have been the president in the 60's. That's why we have the electoral college vote. The founding fathers knew that the majority of the people were too ignorant to make important decisions about our country.

And this leads me to my point about Microsoft. Most people in the world, much less the US, know little about the unethical business practices of Microsoft. All they care about is surfing the web, or sending email. This is why the majority of the US populace show indifference toward the case. They just don't get it! Most people are NOT technologists, engineers, or IT professionals. I mean, ask the common Joe how to connect to the internet, he'll have to hire/ask a profession to show him how to do it. If a common consumer doesn't understand the technology he uses at home/work, then how do you expect them to understand the complexities of the Microsoft case?

Licensing, XLM, HTML, .Net, Passport, GNU, GLP, cookies, security certificates, digital signatures, C#, Java, WMA, etc. are all technical jargon that can be spoken during the technical case. Do you honestly

think  
that the majority of people know what these terms mean?

If they don't, then how can they make a educated decision about  
a complex technical monopoly case?

So, John Ashcroft basically made the decision to end the case  
for the DOJ because the American people really didn't understand it,  
or care about it (in the light of the 9/11 attacks, and the dot-com  
downturn).

But, the Microsoft case has far reaching consequences if the necessary  
steps aren't taken to prevent Microsoft from abusing it's monopoly power  
in the future.

I feel that the States proposal on what to do about Microsoft is a good  
proposal.  
Although some do not feel that it goes far enough (less a breakup). I  
believe that  
it cuts out all the potential loopholes that plague the current DOJ  
settlement  
(swiss cheese settlement).

Microsoft should be under the spotlight for the next 10-15 years (or  
however long it takes).  
Every move they make, every deal they make are moves that they use to  
extend their power. And the scrutiny they will receive is justified.  
Microsoft  
has the power now. So, its the watchdogs of the tech world that will keep  
an eye on everything Microsoft does. Because the company with the power  
can abuse that power. And they have, in the past, in the present, and  
will  
continue to do so in the future unless they are watched and their  
behavior  
is curtailed.

I end this letter with a question....  
What's worse than a Government Big Brother?

A Corporate Big Brother!

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If at first you don't succeed, then sky-diving definitely isn't for you.  
-Steven Wright  
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